

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 30, 2021

The Honorable Martin Walsh  
Secretary of Labor  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Jeff Zients  
White House Coronavirus Response  
Coordinator  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Secretary Walsh and Mr. Zients,

As the Biden Administration's COVID-19 task force executes its comprehensive national strategy to combat COVID-19, we write to urge you to continue to work with Congress, private companies, states, territories, Indian Tribes, and other jurisdictions to ensure that employees are offered full pay for any time off needed to get vaccinated, and we ask that you respond by identifying any statutory changes necessary to help you meet this goal.

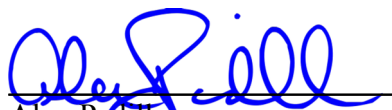
Millions of hourly shift workers are financially unable to take unpaid time off for vaccination and recovery. These workers are disproportionately from low-income, minority, and immigrant communities. According to a recent survey, nearly 20% of workers have not been vaccinated because they are afraid of missing work or are too busy. That proportion increased to 26% for Black workers and 40% for Hispanic workers. In June, the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 65% of workers were encouraged by their employer to get a COVID-19 vaccine, but only 50% received paid time off to get the shot or recover from side effects. Workers in the group that received paid time off were more likely to be vaccinated.

As infections with the Delta variant rise across the country, it is more important than ever for the administration to use its full authority to increase our nation's COVID-19 vaccination rate and put the pandemic behind us. Likewise, it is vital that the federal government continues to support paid leave for working people in this country to get vaccinated and recover from any after-effects of vaccination. While we are grateful that President Biden has called on all employers to provide paid time off for employees to get vaccinated, more must be done.

We urge the Department of Labor (DOL) to identify the parts of federal law for which DOL has enforcement authority, if any, that would provide for time off for a COVID-19 vaccination. In the upcoming Occupational Safety and Health Administration's emergency temporary standard, we ask that you clarify details on the requirement for paid time off to be given for an employee to receive the vaccine and to recover from any side effects. Finally, we ask that you report back on what action from Congress would be necessary to help further these goals.

We look forward to working together to combat the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress  
Chair, Committee on  
Oversight and Reform



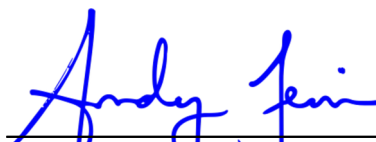
Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



Andy Levin  
Member of Congress



John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



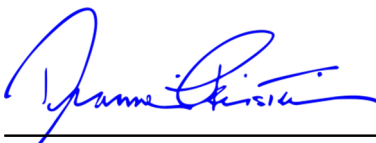
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman  
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



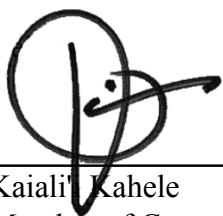
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress




Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large circle and a vertical line.

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Kaiali'i Kahele  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mazie K. Hirono".

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Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator